

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing, if entered, replaces all prior versions of the claims in the present application.

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method comprising:
~~a data processing system~~ receiving a request to reserve a function space for use on ~~at least~~ a future date, wherein
~~the request comprises a plurality of criteria;~~
~~a category of a plurality of categories comprises the space, wherein~~
~~the data processing system stores~~ storing availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for ~~[[the]] a~~ category, and a set of pricing rules, ~~and wherein~~
~~the request comprises a plurality of criteria;~~
defining the category, wherein
~~the category comprises a subset of the plurality of function spaces,~~
~~the subset of function spaces comprises the function space, and~~
~~each function space of the subset of function spaces has one or more~~
~~similar attributes;~~
assigning a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function spaces, wherein
each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount of revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;
~~a processor~~ determining an availability of the each of ~~a plurality of the~~ function spaces in the category on the future date, wherein
the determining ~~the availability further comprises determining the availability is~~ based upon some or all of the availability information~~[],]~~ and one or more of the plurality of criteria;
determining ~~that none of whether~~ the ~~plurality of~~ function spaces in the category that satisfy the one or more of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date;

if none of the function spaces is available on the future date, accessing the authorization level for the category, ~~in response to the determining that none of the plurality of function spaces are available~~, wherein the authorization level indicates ~~how many a number of~~ overbookings that are allowed for the category on the future date;

determining whether an overbooking is allowed by comparing the authorization level and a number of existing reservations for the subset of function spaces on the future date;

if the overbooking is allowed, automatically providing a real-time price quote for the function space based on the set of pricing rules, ~~in response to determining that an additional overbooking is allowed for the category, based upon a comparison of the authorization level to a number of existing reservations for function spaces in the category on the future date and the threshold revenue value assigned to the function space;~~

receiving an acceptance of the real-time price quote ~~for the space~~ from a user; overbooking a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance, wherein

the overbooking comprises accepting a reservation for the category space for use on the future date even though none of the function spaces in the category are currently determined to be available on the future date; and

subsequent to the overbooking, mapping the category space to a specific function space in the category, wherein

the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality of criteria, and ~~wherein~~

the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a cancellation made subsequent to the overbooking; and

~~converting, after the mapping, the reservation for the category space to a reservation for the specific function space.~~

2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of properties are individual hotels of a hotel chain.
- 4-5. (Cancelled)
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving a rejection of the real-time price quote from the user; and
providing a set of alternatives to one or more of the plurality of criteria in real-time, in response to the receiving the rejection, wherein
the set of alternatives are available on the future date.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, wherein the determining whether the overbooking is allowed further comprises:
maximizing revenue generated by the overbooking by
defining the category is specified by using one or more category-related criteria included in of the plurality of criteria , and
selecting one or more of the pricing rules for use in the automatically
providing the real-time price quote.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles, and area.
9. (Currently Amended) A tangible machine-readable storage medium that provides executable instructions that, when executed by a processor, cause the processor:
receive a request to reserve a function space for use on at least a future date,
wherein
~~a category of a plurality of categories comprises the space, wherein~~
the request comprises a plurality of criteria;

store availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for a category, and a set of pricing rules;

define a category, wherein

the category comprises a subset of the plurality of function spaces, the subset of function spaces comprises the function space, and each function space of the subset of function spaces has one or more similar attributes;

assign a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function spaces, wherein

each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount of revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;

determine an availability of ~~the~~ each of ~~a plurality of the~~ function spaces in the category on the future date~~[,]~~ based upon some or all of the availability information ~~for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties~~ and one or more of the plurality of criteria;

determine ~~that none of whether~~ the ~~plurality of~~ function spaces in the category ~~that~~ satisfy the one or more of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date;

access an authorization level for the category, ~~in response to the determining that none of the plurality of function spaces are available on the future date if none of the function spaces is available on the future data,~~ wherein

the authorization level indicates ~~how many a number of~~ overbookings ~~that~~ are allowed for the category on the future date;

determine whether an overbooking is allowed by comparing the authorization level and a number of existing reservations for the subset of function spaces on the future date;

automatically provide a real-time price quote for the function space based on a set of pricing rules and the threshold revenue value assigned to the function space, in response to determining that an additional if the

overbooking is allowed ~~for the category on the future date, based upon a comparison of the authorization level to a number of existing reservations for function spaces in the category on the future date;~~

receive an acceptance of the real time price quote ~~for the space~~ from a user; overbook a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance, wherein overbooking the category space comprises accepting a reservation for the category space for use on the future date even though none of the function spaces in the category are currently determined to be available on the future date; **and**

subsequent to the category space being overbooked, map the category space to a specific function space in the category, wherein the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality of criteria, and **wherein**

the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a cancellation made subsequent to the category space being overbooked; **and**

~~convert, after mapping the category space, the reservation for the category space to a reservation for the specific function space.~~

10. (Cancelled)

11. (**Currently Amended**) The machine-readable medium of claim 9,
wherein the plurality of properties are individual hotels of a hotel chain.

12-13. (Cancelled)

14. (**Currently Amended**) The machine-readable medium of claim 9,
wherein the executable instructions are further configured to:
receive a rejection of the real-time price quote ~~for the space~~ from the user; and
provide a set of alternatives to one or more of the plurality of criteria in real-time,
in response to receipt of the rejection, wherein
the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

15. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 14₂, wherein the category is specified defined by one or more category-related criteria included in the plurality of criteria.

16. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 15₂, wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles, and area.

17. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:
a central data processing system having a memory device, the memory device having stored thereon: availability information for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties, an authorization level for a category, and a set of pricing rules;
the central data processing system having a processor configured to:
receive a request to reserve a function space for use on at least a future date, wherein
the category of a plurality of categories comprises the space,
wherein
the request comprises a plurality of criteria;
define the category, wherein
the category comprises a subset of the plurality of function
spaces,
the subset of function spaces comprise the function space, and
each function space of the subset of function spaces has one or
more similar attributes;
assign a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of
function spaces, wherein
each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum
amount of revenue required to allow use of the function
spaces;

determine an availability of the each of ~~a plurality of the~~ function spaces in the category on the future date[[,]] based upon some or all of availability information ~~for a plurality of function spaces at a plurality of properties~~ and one or more of the plurality of criteria; determine ~~that none of whether~~ the ~~plurality of~~ function spaces in the category that satisfy the one or more of the plurality of criteria are available on the future date;

access an authorization level for the category,~~in response to the determining that none of the plurality of function spaces are available if none of the function spaces is available on the future date~~, wherein the authorization level indicates ~~how many a number of~~ overbookings that are allowed for the category on the future date;

determine whether an overbooking is allowed by comparing the authorization level and a number of existing reservations for the subset of function spaces on the future date;

automatically provide a real-time price quote for the ~~function~~ space based on a set of pricing rules ~~and the threshold revenue value assigned to the function space, in response to determining that an additional if the~~ overbooking is allowed ~~for the category on the future date, based upon a comparison of the authorization level to a number of existing reservations for function spaces in the category on the future date;~~

receive an acceptance of the real time price quote ~~for the space~~ from a user;

overbook a category space in the category, in response to the acceptance, wherein overbooking the category space comprises accepting a reservation for the category space for use on the future date even

though none of the function spaces in the category are currently determined to be available on the future date; and subsequent to the category space being overbooked, map the category space to a specific function space in the category, wherein the specific function space satisfies the one or more of the plurality of criteria, and ~~wherein~~ the specific function space becomes available for reservation due to a cancellation made subsequent to the category space being overbooked; and ~~convert, after mapping the category space, the reservation for the category space to a reservation for the specific function space.~~

18. (Cancelled)

19. (**Currently Amended**) The system of claim 17, wherein the plurality of properties are individual hotels of a hotel chain.

20-21. (Cancelled)

22. (**Currently Amended**) The system of claim 17, wherein the central digital processing system is further configured to:
receive a rejection of the real-time price quote ~~for the requested function space~~; and provide an alternative to the request in real-time ~~in response to the rejection~~, in response to receipt of the rejection, wherein the set of alternatives are available on the future date.

23. (**Currently Amended**) The system of claim 22, wherein the category is specified defined by one or more category-related criteria included in the request.

24. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 23, wherein the category-related criteria include one or more criteria selected from the group consisting of attendance, event type, setup styles, and area.

25. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of criteria includes criteria selected from a group ~~of criteria~~ consisting of date, day-part, and supplementary sales.

26. **(Currently Amended)** The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the plurality of criteria includes criteria selected from a group ~~of criteria~~ consisting of date, day-part, and supplementary sales.

27. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 17, wherein the ~~request~~ ~~includes a~~ plurality of criteria is selected from a group ~~of criteria~~ consisting of date, day-part, and supplementary sales.

28.-32. (Cancelled)

33. **(Currently Amended)** A method, ~~the method~~ comprising:
~~a data processing system~~-receiving a request for a function space in a particular category, wherein
the request comprises a plurality of criteria,
the plurality of criteria comprises a ranking of facility quality;
~~the data processing system stores storing~~ availability information for a plurality of function spaces in a common reservation table, wherein
the common reservation table concurrently stores information related to an inventory of the plurality of function spaces, wherein
the plurality of function spaces is represented by a corresponding plurality of category spaces, ~~and wherein~~
each of the category spaces represents a non-specific unit of function space in the particular category,

each of the non-specific units of function space in the particular category has one or more similar attributes,

each of the plurality of function spaces is a specific space located at one of a plurality of properties[[,]];

~~the data processing system stores storing~~ a set of pricing rules, wherein the request comprises a plurality of criteria, the plurality of criteria comprises a ranking of facility quality, and the pricing rules comprise rules for pricing the function space based on a time of year;

defining the particular category;

assigning a threshold revenue value for the each of the plurality of function spaces, wherein

each of the threshold revenue values identifies a minimum amount of revenue required to allow use of the function spaces;

~~a processor of a central reservation system data processing system~~

determining an availability of the each of the plurality of function spaces, wherein

the determining ~~comprises determining the availability is~~ based upon some or all of the availability information and one or more of the plurality of criteria,

the determining ~~comprises determining the availability is~~ contingent on [[a]] the threshold revenue [[for]] value assigned to the function space,

the threshold revenue value comprises an expected food and drink revenue associated with the request and revenue derived from an expected number of sleeping room rentals associated with the request, and the threshold revenue value is determined based on a day part for which the function space is requested;

automatically providing a real-time price quote for the request based on the set of pricing rules and the threshold revenue value assigned to the function space, wherein

in response to having determined that a requested function space satisfying the plurality of criteria is unavailable, an alternative to the requested function space is presented,
the alternative is selected as a closest approximation to the request,
the alternative is selected based on being fully available,
the pricing rules comprise general pricing rules and property-specific pricing rules, and
the real-time price quote includes a pricing discount based on an attendance of an event, profit for one or more expected guest room rentals, and an expected profit on food and drink sales;
in response to a user rejecting the real time price quote, presenting the alternative; receiving an acceptance of the real-time price quote **for the function space** from a user;
establishing a reservation for one of the category spaces allocated for a length of time including a setup period and teardown period, wherein the length of time is determined in response to a selected setup style and the attendance; and
converting, ~~after a delay~~, the reservation for the one of the category spaces to a reservation for one of the function spaces in the particular category.